

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 11, 12 and 25 as shown below, in which deleted terms are indicated by strikethrough and/or double brackets, and added terms are indicated by underscoring.

1 1. (Previously presented) An elevated deck snowboard for sliding over snow,
2 comprising:

3 an elongated slide board having a slide surface on a lower surface thereof and
4 having a defined length;

5 an elongated step board defining a deck on an upper surface thereof which is
6 capable of freely accommodating both feet of a user, and attached to an upper surface of
7 the slide board in spaced and substantially parallel relationship via a connecting assembly
8 including a plurality of connecting members, the step board having a length substantially
9 equal to or greater than the length of the slide board;

10 the connecting assembly being disposed inwardly of peripheral edges of the slide
11 and step boards; and

12 the connecting assembly substantially preventing the slide board and step board
13 from pivoting relative to each other in at least a lateral direction of the snowboard where
14 connected by said connecting members during use of the snowboard, such that when in
15 use, the step board is capable of allowing significant leverage to be applied to the
16 peripheral edges of the slide board.

1 2. (Previously presented) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein the connecting
2 assembly is provided in longitudinally middle parts of the slide and step boards and
3 includes at least two of said connecting members spaced from each other in a longitudinal
4 direction of the snowboard.

1 3. (Previously presented) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein the step board is
2 appreciably greater in width than the slide board.

1 4. (Original) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein the step board is provided with
2 an engagement portion for allowing engagement of a toe of a snowboarder in a nose part
3 thereof.

1 5. (Original) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein the step board is provided with
2 at least one boot binding.

1 6. (Previously presented) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein the connecting
2 assembly substantially completely prevents the slide board and step board from moving
3 relative to each other where connected by said connecting members during use of the
4 snowboard.

1 7. (Previously presented) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein said connecting
2 members are formed of substantially rigid material and substantially immovably fixed
3 between the slide board and the step board.

1 8. (Previously presented) A snowboard according to claim 7, wherein the connecting
2 members are substantially tubular in shape.

1 9. (Previously presented) An elevated deck snowboard for sliding over snow, comprising:
2 an elongated slide board having a slide surface on a lower surface thereof; and
3 an elongated step board defining a deck on an upper surface thereof which is
4 capable of freely accommodating both feet of a user, and attached to an upper surface of

5 the slide board in spaced and substantially parallel non-integral relationship via a
6 connecting assembly comprising a plurality of connecting members disposed inwardly of
7 peripheral edges of the slide and step boards and made of substantially non-compressible
8 and relatively rigid material such that portions of the slide and step boards remain in a
9 fixed, substantially parallel and spaced relationship where connected by the connecting
10 members during use of the snowboard;
11 wherein the spacing between the slide board and step board is greater than the
12 combined thickness of the slide board and the step board.

10. [Canceled]

1 11. (Currently amended) A snowboard according to claim [[10]] 2, wherein the
2 connecting members are formed of at least one of hard plastic material and metallic
3 material.

1 12. (Currently amended) A snowboard according to claim [[10]] 2, wherein the
2 connecting members are substantially tubular in shape.

1 13. (Previously presented) A snowboard according to claim 9, wherein the connecting
2 assembly is provided in longitudinally middle parts of the slide board and step board.

1 14. (Previously presented) A snowboard according to claim 9, wherein the step board is
2 appreciably greater in width than the slide board.

15. [Canceled]

1 16. (Previously presented) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein the connecting
2 assembly includes at least two of said connecting members spaced from each other in a
3 longitudinal direction of the snowboard.

17. [Canceled]

1 18. (Previously presented) An elevated deck snowboard for sliding over snow,
2 comprising:
3 an elongated slide board having a slide surface on a lower surface thereof and
4 snow engaging peripheral edges, said slide board having a defined length;
5 an elongated step board defining a deck on an upper surface thereof which is
6 capable of freely accommodating both feet of a user; and
7 a connecting assembly made of substantially non-compressible material
8 connecting the step board to an upper surface of the slide board in spaced and
9 substantially parallel relationship, said step board being constructed and arranged to
10 permit a user's feet to be shifted on the step board during use for imparting leverage
11 through the step board to control orientation of the slide board on the snow;
12 the connecting assembly being disposed at intermediate portions of the slide and
13 step boards inwardly of the peripheral edges of the slide and step boards, and
14 substantially prohibiting at least lateral pivoting movement between portions of the
15 boards where connected by the connecting assembly during use of the snowboard;
16 wherein the step board has a length substantially equal to or greater than the
17 length of the slide board, and wherein the connection between the two boards is limited to
18 that provided by the connecting assembly.

1 19. (Previously presented) An elevated deck snowboard for sliding over snow,
2 comprising:
3 an elongated slide board having a slide surface on a lower surface thereof;
4 an elongated step board defining a deck on an upper surface thereof which is
5 capable of freely accommodating both feet of a user; and
6 a connecting assembly made of substantially non-compressible material
7 connecting the step board to an upper surface of the slide board in spaced and
8 substantially parallel relationship, and to allow a substantially increased leverage for the
9 user in controlling the slide board by prohibiting at least lateral pivoting movement
10 between portions of the slide and step boards where connected by the connecting
11 assembly during use of the snowboard, the connecting assembly being disposed at
12 intermediate portions of the slide and step boards inwardly of peripheral edges of the
13 slide and step boards;
14 wherein the connecting assembly spaces the step board upwardly away from the
15 slide board by a distance which is greater than the thickness of the slide board.

1 20. (Previously presented) A snowboard according to claim 19, wherein the
2 connecting assembly substantially prohibits all relative movement between portions of the
3 slide and step boards where connected by the connecting assembly during use of the
4 snowboard.

1 21. (Previously presented) A snowboard according to claim 18, wherein the
2 connecting assembly is made of substantially non-compressible and relatively rigid
3 material and is substantially immovably fixed between the slide board and the step board.

1 22. (Previously presented) A snowboard according to claim 1, wherein said connecting
2 assembly is disposed closer to lateral peripheral edges of the slide and step boards than to
3 longitudinal peripheral edges of the slide and step boards.

1 23. (Previously presented) A snowboard according to claim 9, wherein said
2 connecting assembly is disposed closer to lateral peripheral edges of the slide and step
3 boards than to longitudinal peripheral edges of the slide and step boards.

1 24. (Previously presented) A snowboard according to claim 19, wherein said
2 connecting assembly is disposed closer to lateral peripheral edges of the slide and step
3 boards than to longitudinal peripheral edges of the slide and step boards.

1 25. (Currently amended) An elevated deck snowboard for sliding over snow,
2 comprising:

3 an elongated slide board having a slide surface on a lower surface thereof and
4 having peripheral edges;

5 an elongated step board defining a deck on an upper surface thereof which is
6 capable of accommodating both feet of a user, said step board having peripheral edges;
7 and

8 a plurality of connecting members non-integrally connecting the step board to an
9 upper surface of the slide board in spaced and substantially parallel relationship, the
10 connecting assembly substantially preventing the slide board and step board from
11 pivoting relative to each other in at least a lateral direction of the snowboard where
12 connected by said connecting members during use of the snowboard, and the connecting
13 members being disposed inwardly of the peripheral edges of the slide and step boards;
14 wherein open spaces are defined between the peripheral edges of the boards, and

- 15 wherein the connecting members space the step board upwardly away from the slide
- 16 board by a distance which is greater than the combined thickness of the two boards.